

also committed to working toward that in the coming session.

Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I understand we are in a period of morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak for up to 30 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is recognized.

Mr. GRAHAM. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that Stacy Rosenberg, a staff member of my office, be granted floor privileges for the duration of today's session.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. GRAHAM. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

NATIONAL PARK PRESERVATION

Mr. GRAHAM. Mr. President, on October 31 of this year, I saw yet another example of the challenges we are facing in our National Park System.

Two weekends ago, I visited Bandelier National Monument in New Mexico, located about 1 hour west of Santa Fe.

Bandelier National Monument was claimed a national monument under the jurisdiction of the Forest Service in 1916. In 1932, it was transferred to the National Park Service.

Bandelier contains 32,737 acres, of which 23,267 acres are designated as wilderness. It is a park that is intended to preserve the cliff houses of the Pueblo Indian.

I draw your attention to this photograph taken near the entrance to Bandelier National Monument. One of the cliff homes can be seen at the base of this large cliff which forms the most dramatic signature of Bandelier National Monument. This photograph gives some idea of the magnitude of the cultural resources which are located in this park.

In addition to the preservation of the cultural resource of the monument, the outstanding superintendent at Bandelier, Mr. Roy Weaver, also contends with preservation of historical resources such as 1930s CCC buildings which were constructed in order to properly present the park to its many visitors but which have fallen into a sad state of disrepair.

Using funds from the recreation fee demonstration program, Bandelier National Monument has refurbished several of these existing structures to a functional condition. This park, as many of our Nation's parks, is faced with a degradation of its core resources. One of the significant challenges is the unnatural pace of erosion within the monument's wilderness area.

This problem is in part due to intense grazing which occurred prior to the designation of the lands as a national monument in 1916. This activity ended over 60 years ago but is still impacting the resources and the health of the park. The heavy grazing prior to 1916 reduced the underbrush, allowing the pinon tree to take over the landscape. This tree is now firmly established and has prevented the growth of other natural species in the canyon of Bandelier. Without the diverse plant species in the forest to retain the soil, erosion occurs at a much more rapid pace. This erosion is one of the principal reasons why the archeological sites for which the monument was established are now severely threatened. We are in grave danger of losing artifacts, structures, and information about a people who spent hundreds of years building a society in the Southwest.

In addition to cultural resource damage to the unnatural state of the environment at Bandelier, human behavior has also had negative impacts. One of the first areas visitors to Bandelier approach, and just off the main trail, is a series of cave dwellings. Ascending the ladder into the cave is stepping back hundreds of years into a different culture. One arrives at the cave only to find the stark realities of contemporary America by a desecration of these caves with graffiti. This photograph showing an example of that desecration speaks a thousand words about the level of respect which we as a society have paid to our national treasures over the years.

There is some hope. In 1998, the Congress and the administration established a program at the suggestion of the National Park Service. It is called Vanishing Treasures. This program was the brain child of the national park superintendents from Chaco Culture National Historic Site, Aztec Ruins National Monument, and the Salinas Pueblo Missions National Monument.

The Vanishing Treasure Program seeks to restore the ruins to a condition where maintenance scheduled at regular intervals rather than large-scale restoration projects will be sufficient to keep the ruins in good condition. The program also has another very significant objective: Training the next generation of preservation specialists who can perform this highly specific, complex craftsmanship of maintaining national treasures such as these caves at Bandelier National Monument.

The original outline of the Vanishing Treasures Program called for \$3.5 mil-

lion in the first year, increasing by \$1 million per year until it reached \$6 million in the year 2001, after which it would decrease slightly until the year 2008. We hoped during that time period to have been able to have dealt with the residue of issues such as the desecration of the caves at Bandelier.

Unfortunately, beginning in fiscal year 1998, the funding was not at the recommended \$3.5 million level but, rather, was at \$1 million. In fiscal year 1999, it was increased to \$1.3 million. The current Interior appropriations bill, which has been passed by both the House and the Senate, contains \$994,000 for the Vanishing Treasures Program.

At this level of funding distributed throughout the entire Southwest, some 41 national park sites benefit from this program. At that level of funding, we cannot possibly come close to meeting the needs for the protection of our cultural treasures in the Southwest. We are effectively making the decision that we are prepared to see these cultural and historic treasures lost before we make funds available for their preservation.

We are at a crossroads in our Nation's historical efforts to protect and preserve those national treasures which are the responsibility of the National Park Service. The history of our Nation is marked by activism on public land issues. The first full century of the United States' existence—the 19th century—was marked by the Louisiana Purchase which added almost 530 million acres to the United States, changing America from an eastern coastal nation to a continental empire.

One hundred years later, President Theodore Roosevelt set the tone for public land issues in the second full history in our Nation's history. He did it both in words and action. President Theodore Roosevelt stated:

Conservation means development as much as it does protection. I recognize the right and duty of this generation to develop and use the natural resources of our land; but I do not recognize the right to waste them, or to rob, by wasteful use, the generations that will come after us.

Roosevelt took action to meet these goals. During his administration, the United States protected almost 230 million acres of lands for future public use. The question for us as we commence the third full century, the 21st century of the United States, is, can we live up to this example? Can we be worthy of the standards of Thomas Jefferson at the beginning of the 19th century and Theodore Roosevelt at the beginning of this century?

I have discussed today the issues I witnessed at Bandelier National Monument and the small efforts being made to rectify this situation. Estimates of the maintenance backlog throughout the National Park Service system range from \$1.2 billion to over \$3.5 billion, depending on the calculation method.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to have printed at the conclusion